

Needs of the Field

When stakeholders from an array of roles were asked “What is the state of current practice around the practical application of the technical and adaptive strategies of implementation?” they replied:

1. What is the vision for the practical application of the technical and adaptive strategies of implementation?
 - To reach out to a broad range of stakeholders making meetings and activities convenient for all who must attend
 - Look at the uniqueness and talents of the people who surround us and put them to best use
 - To build a shared vision based on shared meaning and understanding
 - To build upon the best practices that are being done and do things with intentionality
 - Rigor, relevance, and relationships are critical to implementation. Relationships are the core foundational piece upon which to build the technical side
 - Make sure there is a culture of respect
 - A comprehensive and coordinated system of services and supports is essential both in and out of school
 - All youth are educated in a safe, supportive, and caring environment in which they feel connected and supported
 - All youth involved in relevant and rigorous preparation activities that focus on 21st Century skills.
 - All youth have their unique needs met, have the opportunity to be productive citizens, have choice about their outcomes, and have full access to and are involved in the community.
 - All youth are engaged in meaningful active learning school experiences that result in successful school and post school outcomes. Universal Design for Learning (UDL) is employed within the learning process.
 - Youth and families are empowered in a meaningful way, by involving them in the planning process
 - All youth are working and developing to their greatest potential within an integrated, seamless lifelong system of services.
 - Learning is personalized for all youth based on data-driven decision-making
 - Professional development/training, including parents, is provided to keep people knowledgeable
 - Strong interagency agreements/ and collaboration with informal support networks are present

2. What is current practice?
 - There are pockets of excellence and passion worthy of replication
 - Fragmented systems exist where students often drop through the cracks
 - Current practices are not always evidence-based
 - We struggle to provide adequate time to meet current mandates and to implement effective interventions and to see the desired results



- There is a limited focus on social/emotional/behavioral learning
- Telling people to follow cookbook vs inviting people to participate
- Technology challenges in availability and expertise
- Disjointed practices with mixed success are commonplace
- There is limited recognition that services that support instruction can take place in many settings
- Availability of funding, services, and resources is localized
- There is an emphasis on compliance rather than program improvement
- There is a lack of stakeholder involvement in the development and delivery of professional development
- There is a disconnect between the school and the community
- Low levels of outreach by different agencies regarding differing abilities; services are label-oriented
- There is little time in the school schedule for collaboration
- Ability to meet and serve needs of those with differing disabilities and abilities is not widespread
- Family engagement is critical but does not always occur

3. What are the gaps?

- Communication and vision
- Need to resurface resources that already exist
- Funding and resource allocation is variable
- Training and professional practice is often disconnected
- Equitable access to funding and resources
- Professional practice gaps
- Still viewing family involvement in traditional ways
- Silos and territoriality still exist
- School year and school day are not organized to maximize learning opportunities
- Building relationship development skills of all stakeholders
- How to meet and serve needs of those with differing disabilities and abilities
- Increased understanding between education, business, community, vocational rehabilitation and others service providers' processes
- Regional coordination across agencies to help catch youth who might otherwise fall through gaps
- Availability and use of technology
- Training for all stakeholders; need to find time and opportunities
- Ability to develop natural supports, intentionally developed-skill building
- Common identifiers/confidentiality

4. What processes need to be in place to support acquisition of knowledge and skills?

- Shared engagement building upon the assets of the community
- Bring formal and informal decision makers to the table early
- Pick the right people to bring the messages forward. Consider the roles that they will play being intentional
- Time to collaborate and problem solve in schools
- Invest in time to process discussions, reflections, actions



- Consider the infusion of resources to the human side
- Make connections for the practitioners of research to practice
- Help people in the community become the ambassadors for change
- Bring the community to hear the message of the innovators who are inspiring meaningful and positive change in schools
- Leadership comes in all types of packages. Look creatively for the right people
- Let the data communicate the present performance level and let the group's reaction to this build the vision, plan for change, etc.
- Present the data to engender collaboration vs finger pointing
- Be sensitive to the culture of communities
- Find the common understandings and build upon that
- Consider UDL as the overarching framework that could be incorporated with RTI and PBIS
- Be responsive to the changes that are encountered (people moving, funding levels changing, etc.)
- Be patient for "perspective change" Listen to understand and provide sufficient time to share what is important to them
- Intentional training on cultural competency
- Use the 4 "Ps" Strategy: (1) instigate Passion; (2) engage People; (3) establish Purpose; and produce a Product
- Encourage and support networks between and among programs
- Engage youth in community activities (Scouts, Big Brothers and Sisters, etc.)
- Support access to resources for all youth
- Develop a system that facilitates communication, collaboration, and planning for reform and improvement
- Restructure the school day to foster collaboration, professional development, and changes in children's routines
- Use of integrative data systems
- Ensure fidelity of implementation and accountability
- Embrace change
- Employ strengths-based models and approaches to working with families, children, and service providers
- Attend to the needs of the community based on size, demographics, geographic location, access to services, etc.
- Professional development and services across agencies, services, and providers
- Encourage flexible support systems
- Collaboration and shared decision-making
- Engagement of the entire community
- High expectations
- Family involvement and empowerment
- Personal planning for all youth

This document was generated within the IDEA Partnership by cross-stakeholders representing teachers, administrators, related service personnel, family members and youth, state education agencies, higher education, and technical assistance providers.